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8 October 1963



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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE BULLETIN



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State Department review completed

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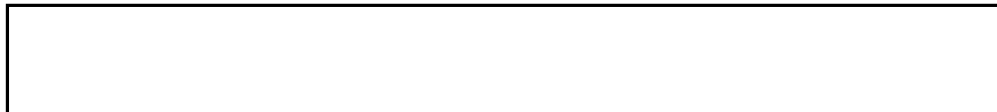
1. USSR: New Lands experience agricultural disaster.
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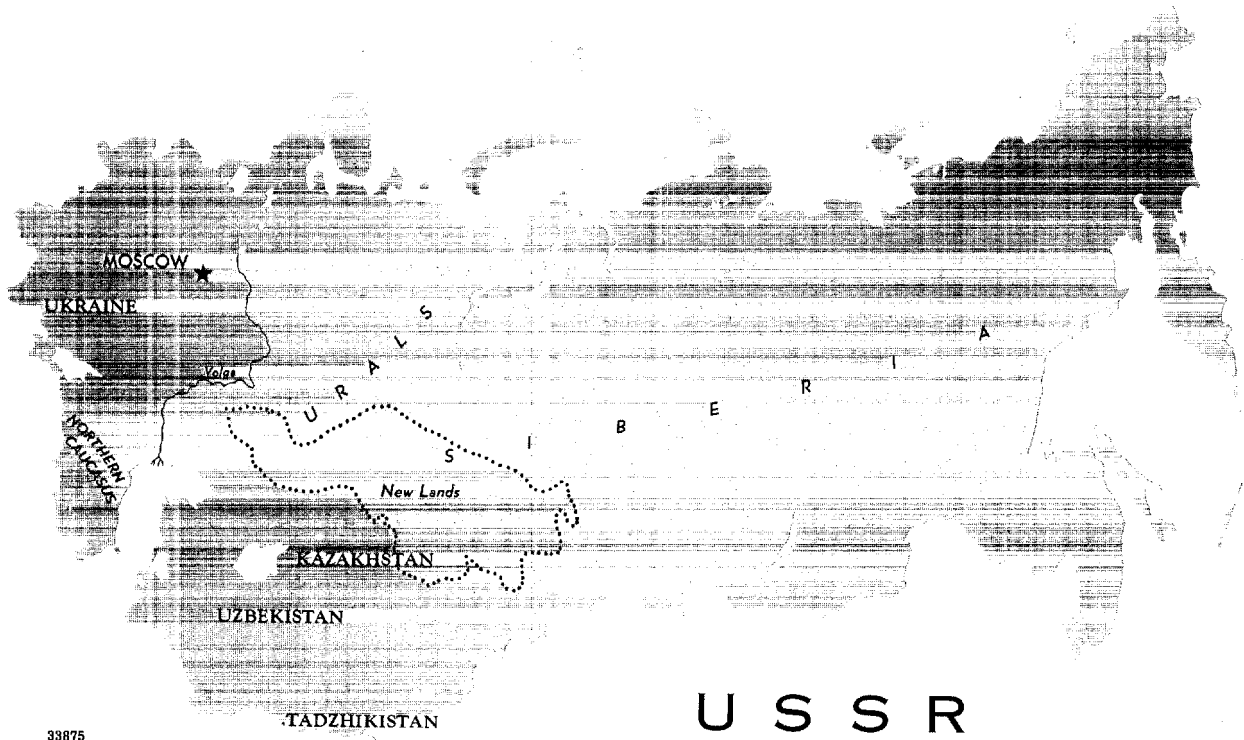
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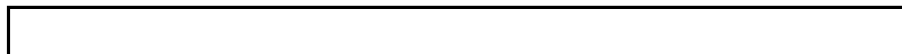


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DAILY BRIEF

USSR: A major agricultural disaster has apparently taken place in the important "New Lands" region of the USSR.

According to a Soviet official, Kazakhstan, the heart of the New Lands, harvested less than four bushels of wheat per acre this year. Last year the Soviets claimed about ten bushels per acre for the area. US production averages about 15-20 bushels per acre.

It now appears likely that the total Soviet wheat harvest this year will be about 44-million tons compared to last year's estimated 57-million tons.

The regime has evidently written off any further efforts to increase grain output by expanding acreage as it did in the New Lands. Production increases in the future are to be achieved through the intensive application of agricultural chemicals and by greater mechanization and irrigation.

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West Germany - USSR: [Chancellor-designate Erhard sees the possibility of obtaining political concessions from the Soviet Union in return for long-term economic aid.]

[Erhard told Ambassador McGhee on 3 October that he does not think the West should put pressure on Khrushchey now, but rather should attempt serious negotiations.]

[In extended remarks which McGhee describes as displaying considerable political naivete, Erhard outlined his approach to negotiations. He said the Germans were ready to make considerable economic sacrifice for unification, but that the amount of aid they would offer would depend on what the Soviets would offer in exchange. He cited, as an example, that Germany might contribute industrial installations for the development of Siberia over a 10 to 20 year period if Khrushchev would agree to a phased German unification program.]

[Erhard explained that there are only limited possibilities for the strictly economic development of German-Soviet trade since the USSR has nothing Germany needs. Moreover, if Germany were to grant 5 to 10 year credits, the Soviets could not repay them.]

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DAILY BRIEF

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Burma: The Ne Win military regime continues its efforts to quell the discontent that appears to be growing among political and religious elements.

Ne Win apparently believes that his opponents are plotting a counterrevolution. Eleven prominent political figures arrested last August, and a number of army officers suspected of association with political opposition groups reportedly have been "retired" since then.

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In the past few days, there have been widespread arrests of national and local leaders of opposition political parties and ethnic minority groups who had persisted in agitating for a return to parliamentary democracy and for general elections.

Ne Win has been more cautious in handling religious opposition. He has not yet taken direct action against the Buddhist hierarchy, although Buddhist leaders have sharpened their criticism of his leftism. A leading Buddhist monk told a crowd of 10,000 in Mandalay late last month that Ne Win should be overthrown.

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